

# **Guidelines for Organizing PNW-MAA Section Meetings**

June Meeting Edition

**by Ken Ross  
Fall 2002**

## **Preface**

This pamphlet has been created to assist organizers of section meetings.□It is not intended to be an intimidating document.□No meeting will involve all the issues mentioned and some issues may arise that are not covered here. We've tried to list all possibilities to serve as a check list.□

I was greatly assisted by having notes from previous meetings, especially those from Millie Johnson at Western Washington University and Jeanette Palmiter at Portland State University.□Moreover, Mike Boardman at Pacific University substantially reorganized, reformatted and generally improved my first draft.

Ken Ross (September 2002)

# Table of Contents

<b>PREFACE.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>SECTION 1. TASKS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
INVITED SPEAKERS.....	4
MINICOURSES.....	4
CONTRIBUTED PAPER SESSIONS.....	4
PANEL DISCUSSIONS.....	4
NEXT PROGRAM.....	4
PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR TWO-YEAR COLLEGE FACULTY.....	5
PROGRAM ELEMENTS FOR STUDENTS.....	5
BANQUET/RECEPTION/OTHER.....	5
BOOK EXHIBITS.....	5
MEETING WEBSITE.....	5
PREPARATION OF BLOCK SCHEDULE AND WRITING UP OF PROGRAM.....	5
REGISTRATION FEES AND OTHER MONEY ISSUES.....	5
TIMELINE FOR THIS PARTICULAR MEETING.....	5
LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS.....	5
<b>SECTION 2. TIMELINE.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION 3. PUBLICITY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
WEBSITE.....	7
NEWSLETTER.....	7
<b>SECTION 4. LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
NEGOTIATIONS WITH HOST INSTITUTION.....	8
OBTAINING SUITABLE SPACE.....	8
OBTAINING APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT.....	8
LINE UP VOLUNTEERS.....	8
MEETING PACKET.....	8
SIGNAGE AND MAPS.....	9
HOTEL/DORM ACCOMMODATIONS.....	9
<b>SECTION 5. MONEY.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>SECTION 6. BANQUET.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1. PNW-MAA BYLAWS EFFECTIVE 2003.....</b>	<b>11</b>

## Section 1. Tasks

The following is a list of tasks involved in planning a section meeting. In the timeline, we suggest that the responsibility for each of these tasks be assigned during July or August.

### Invited Speakers

These are the 50-60 minute talks against which nothing else is scheduled. The number of invited speakers varies with the length of the meeting. Often, there are 2 invited talks and one banquet talk. The section waives registration fees and often provides banquet tickets for invited speakers. Double-check with secretary/treasurer on this. Speakers to consider include:

- MAA speaker supplied by the national MAA at no cost. □ MAA pays travel and lodging. □
- Free Polya Lecturer certain years (2004, 2009, etc). □ See MAA website [http://www.maa.org/sections/Polya\\_rotate.html](http://www.maa.org/sections/Polya_rotate.html).
- Winners of the Distinguished Teaching Award as speakers. □
- Banquet Speaker. Often, one of the invited speakers gives two talks, one being the banquet talk.
- Other invited speakers.

### Minicourses

Usually scheduled for the day before the regular meeting. Often, we have a speaker or two do double-duty and conduct a minicourse as well. Participants pay an extra fee when attending a minicourse. It is important for whomever is responsible for minicourses to work closely with the local arrangements coordinator for any special needs (e.g. computers).

### Contributed Paper Sessions

Generally, contributed papers are 10-20 minute talks. Sometimes there are special sessions focusing on specific topics. Recent examples include "mathematics education research," "innovations in teaching undergraduates," and "junior faculty on their research." □ There should always be general sessions open to all volunteers. It is important to identify the process through which contributed papers will be solicited, reviewed and scheduled.

### Panel Discussions

Recent panel topics have covered the mathematics major, student preparation, and advice to new faculty.

### NExT Program

The section's Project NExT coordinator is responsible for the NExT program. These activities are usually held the day before the regular meeting. PNW-NExT'ers should be encouraged to give contributed papers during the regular meeting as well.

## **Program Elements for Two-Year College Faculty**

The Program Committee should have a two-year college faculty member who will oversee this part of the meeting program.

## **Program Elements for Students**

Usually handled by the Student Program Coordinator of the section. Student engagement, especially at March meetings, is very important. The section has had a policy of waiving registration fees for undergraduates who give a paper. In addition, these students have been given free dorm space, banquet tickets, and registration for unfilled minicourses. The Executive Committee should be consulted to clarify any of these policies for this meeting. Some sections offer additional activities for students (contests, receptions, etc).

## **Banquet/Reception/Other**

Banquet; see Section 6. □Perhaps Saturday lunch. □Perhaps a reception some evening (may get financial support from publishers or host institution). □Perhaps special student dinner (pizza, say) at spring meeting.

## **Book Exhibits**

Book exhibits. □This should include, for sure, an exhibit of MAA books; contact the national MAA. □Other exhibitors and other vendors expect to be charged, perhaps \$100 each, or perhaps \$50 per table.

## **Meeting Website**

Meeting website; see Section 3.

## **Preparation of Block Schedule and Writing up of Program**

Preparing the block schedule (don't forget the MAA Business Meeting) and writing up of the program for the website, newsletter and program booklet.

## **Registration Fees and other Money Issues.**

See Section 5.

## **Timeline for this Particular Meeting.**

This timetable should be agreed upon by the planning committee and executive committee. See Section 2.

## **Local Arrangements**

See Section 4.

## Section 2. Timeline

The following suggested timeline should help you in your planning while allowing the section to take advantage of resources available from the national MAA and elsewhere. Please read through the entire timeline. There may be items that need to be completed earlier in special cases.

### March, Previous Year

- (1) Appointment of Program Committee.
- (2) Decision on Chair of Committee.

### July-August

- (1) Brainstorm themes/topics/speakers/ideas for program.□
- (2) Assign responsibilities for various aspects of the meeting.□See Section 1.

### September

- (1) Contact invited speakers, minicourse organizers, panelists, etc.□
- (2) Prepare preliminary announcement for the fall newsletter.□To the extent known, this should include a list of invited speakers and titles of their talks, panel and minicourse topics, theme if it exists, and call for papers.□
- (3) Mail a draft of the program to the Executive Committee.

### November

- (1) Invite University president or a dean to welcome participants at the meeting.□The welcome should be brief, about ten minutes.□

### December

- (1) Select and make firm arrangements with local hotels, and with dorms if they are being used.□
- (2) Start working on making banquet arrangements.

### January

- (1) Create block schedule (don't forget the business meeting).□
- (2) Be sure organizers of panel discussions have filled in their panels and determined their moderators.□
- (3) Contact hour speakers for missing abstracts, biographies, equipment needs.□
- (4) Contact publishers to participate in exhibits as well as donate funding for coffee and snacks, receptions, door prizes.

### February

- (1) Prepare announcement for spring newsletter, which should have evolved on the website.□This announcement should include registration information, program, lodging possibilities, map, food, activities, etc.□

- (2) Send out call for papers again -- to all department liaisons using the Liaison Coordinator.□
- (3) Send copy of registration package and program to all invited speakers (or refer to website) and invite corrections to their title/abstract/biography and equipment needs.

### **April**

- (1) Find people to introduce hour speakers.□
- (2) For each other session (panel discussions, etc), it is advisable to have some local person responsible to make sure that equipment needs and other needs are met.□
- (3) Contact the national MAA regarding 25 year (exactly) members; certificates will be supplied for handing out at the banquet.

### **May-June**

- (1) Deadline for contributed papers.□It has been traditional to have the deadline very close to the meeting, say three weeks prior to the meeting.□The tradition has been for 15-minute contributed papers, but this is sometimes too short.□Consideration should be given for more time or more flexibility.

### **July**

- (1) Thank speakers, organizers of mincourses, and others.

## **Section 3.□Publicity**

The Program Committee Chair and/or the individual assigned the duty of public information for the meeting should work with the section newsletter editor and homepage editor to be sure timely announcements are made both in print and on-line.

### **Website**

Since 2001, up-to-date meeting information and registration forms have been on a website created at the host institution.□The sites have also included links to local information and a map to and of the meeting site. The website should be handled by an expert and need not be the person in charge of developing the block schedule and writing the program. Examples of previous years' websites are available.

### **Newsletter**

Generally, for a June meeting, a preliminary announcement of the meeting is included in the Fall section newsletter. This announcement includes a list of (committed) speakers, panel sessions, any special sessions and any other information that might raise interest in attending the meeting. A call for contributed papers should also be included here. A full announcement is usually included in the Spring newsletter. This includes information on invited addresses, panel sessions, banquet, lodging, and directions to the meeting location (including from local airports if appropriate). This newsletter also includes a call for contributed papers and a registration form (for those not wanting to register on-line).

## Section 4. □ Local Arrangements

The tasks below are generally handled by the Local Arrangements Coordinator.

### Negotiations with Host Institution

Generally, the Local Arrangements Coordinator works with the Executive Committee on these negotiations. See Section 5 for more information.

### Obtaining Suitable Space

- (1) meeting rooms, including one large enough for hour speakers; □
- (2) registration area;
- (3) area for book exhibits and other vendors;
- (4) area with coffee/snacks available, at least part of the time, and space for gathering. □

Areas (2)-(4) should be very convenient to each other. □

### Obtaining Appropriate Equipment

Be sure suitable equipment is available and be prepared to respond to requests (yes or no, depending on your circumstances). □ Standard equipment includes overhead projectors and, if possible, internet access. □ Some departments provide participants access to computers for email.

### Line up Volunteers

Volunteers can include faculty, staff and students. □ One or two people are needed to handle the registration table, which should include a money box and equipment or pens for nametags. □ The tasks at the registration table shouldn't be onerous because most registrants pre-register. □ At least one person at the registration table should be able to answer all variety of questions, including location of rest rooms. □ It also is nice to have a local person available with local information of things to do in the area. □ Sometimes a local visitors' bureau or campus publicity office will supply brochures that can be set out.

Mathematics students, graduate or undergraduate, should find our meetings interesting and be willing to help place signs on campus and/or "work" a few hours at the meeting. □ In addition, the MAA and some of the other exhibitors will leave books, at the end of the meeting, that can be given to students in appreciation of their "work."

### Meeting Packet

Though this writer doesn't like to see the waste of paper, some departments give each participant a meeting packet with the program, a list of local eating places, some brochures of things to do locally, etc.



## Signage and Maps

Please place some signs on campus directing "MAA meeting" folks to parking and meeting area. □ Be sure to get permission and guidelines in advance from your campus managers.

Provide the person preparing the program with information on how to get to the meeting site, including highways, airports, etc. □ Maps are usually needed. □

## Hotel/Dorm Accommodations

Provide the person preparing the program a short list of suitable hotels/motels/B&Bs. □ If no dorms will be available (next paragraph), include some inexpensive housing for students and others on limited budgets.

If dorms at a college are to be used, it is important to negotiate rates and other issues early on. □ This will include procedures for payment. □ This can get complicated, but is worth the trouble if dorm rates are substantially lower than rates at hotels, etc. □ Sometimes meal packages are available or obligatory. □ Generally, participants are happy to have a meal package that includes breakfasts, but prefer flexibility for their other meals -- assuming that food can be obtained nearby. □ If your dorms require a package that includes meals beyond breakfasts, and if food is available nearby, this is an issue worth taking back to your Program Committee and Executive Committee. □ Getting a statement from one of these committees and talking with a dean or provost might provide enough muscle to get the "dorm package" policy modified.

## Section 5. □ Money

Registration fees need to be set. □ The Program Committee recommends registration fees, which need approval of the Executive Committee. □ Anticipated expenses need to be taken into account; see below.

MAA section meetings offer mathematicians an opportunity to attend quality meetings at low cost and at convenient locations. □ Thus it is important to keep costs of the meeting down. □ It is prudent to sign a contract with the host institution specifying costs and what will be provided. □ Some universities now charge for meeting space, but we cannot afford such costs for our small meetings. □ Apply for funding from various University sources for support, especially free meeting space and secretarial support from the department. □

Sometimes the coffee/snacks or a reception will be sponsored by the university.

Also, see the last paragraph, about dorms, in section 4.

## Section 6. □ Banquet

The banquet should be easy to reach from where most people will be staying. □ Many banquets are on campus someplace. □ Many others are off-campus. The banquet should be priced to be as close to self-supporting as possible. □ When getting and setting the price of the banquet,

keep in mind that we want to encourage students to attend, i.e., keep the price reasonably low. To accommodate everyone, though, it's good to make it clear that people can attend the banquet talk afterward even if they don't take their meal there.

Food choices should include vegetarian. It is also good policy to invite people with other special food needs to contact the member of the Program Committee who is making the banquet arrangements (who will see what can be done).

In addition to the banquet speaker, the agenda at the banquet should include:

- (1) a few words from the Section Governor;
- (2) awarding of the Distinguished Teaching Award;
- (3) acknowledgement of MAA 25 year members;
- (4) presentation of certificates, acknowledgement of section Certificate of Meritorious Service (if any);
- (5) introduction of the new Governor (if any);
- (6) thanking of program committee.

# Appendix 1. PNW-MAA bylaws effective 2003

## Article IV: Meetings

The Section shall hold one or more regular meetings each year. Normally the annual meeting will be held in late spring or early summer and at that time the election of officers shall take place.

For each regular meeting of the section, a Program Committee shall be appointed.□ This committee shall include two Program Chairs (one for universities and four-year colleges and one for two-year colleges), a Local Arrangements Coordinator, the Student Program Coordinator, the Project NEXt Director, the Chair (ex-officio) and the Secretary-Treasurer (ex-officio).

The Program Chairs may serve as co-chairs, or they can agree to designate one of them to serve as chair.

The Program Committee will be responsible for arranging the program for the meeting, which includes decisions regarding invited speakers, minicourses, special sessions, banquets, etc.□ The committee is also responsible for contacting the individuals who make up the program.□ The committee shall work with the Newsletter Editor and Homepage Editor to publicize the meeting.□ The committee will keep the Executive Committee informed of its progress.

The Local Arrangements Coordinator is responsible for making local physical arrangements including meeting and registration space at the local institution, lodging, etc.

Registration fees for the meeting require approval of the Executive Committee. Registration fees for annual Section meetings shall be determined by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Program Committee. Whenever the Chair or Secretary-Treasurer deems it prudent, other decisions of the Program Committee, financial or otherwise, will require approval of the Executive Committee.

--

Kenneth A. Ross  
ross@math.uoregon.edu  
home phone: □541-686-1549